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mates are quick, often more ruthless than the instructor, in detecting a weakness. But if properly directed, they are quick to discern the fine points.

I believe that oral themes furnish excellent training for clear, forcible thinking, and expression shorn of non-essentials.

ELIZABETH GRAEME BARBOUR

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ORAL COMPOSITION

Oral composition and class-correction are good means of improving written composition, but the time will never come when careful correction of papers is unnecessary. However, effective and economical methods will do a great deal to reduce the number of errors and so make the correction of compositions easier. By drawing up a list of cautions based on the errors actually made by preceding speakers and discussing these as a forewarning before the first composition is assigned, the common errors may be reduced to a minimum. By keeping his essays on file during the semester, and through the whole period of his attendance at school, a pupil comes to realize the importance of each exercise and to do his best work on it. A means to help him correct his individual mistakes is to make the necessary corrections in his essays and require him to explain in his next exercise why the corrections were necessary, writing rules, definitions, or discussions. The gain is great enough to warrant the labor.

MRS. HENRY HULST

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VITALIZING LITERATURE STUDY

I heartily approve of the attitude taken in a large part of the discussion today, that our chief thought should be about how to teach correct and effective speaking and writing. All that I have had in mind on that subject, however, has been admirably said by other speakers. As a kind of supplement to our discussion, I may perhaps be permitted to offer two specific suggestions for vitalizing the work in literature.

It is a well-known fact that no description in words, however perfect it may be from a literary standpoint, will convey to the mind of the reader any definite image, unless he has previously had some sense-impression which may serve as a means of interpretation. In spite of this fact, too many of us continue to ask our pupils to read literature

about places and events about which they have no images, and we are astonished that they find the reading dull. It is obviously impossible to travel with our pupils in order to give them the necessary sense-impressions. But the next best thing is possible in most schools—the use of the lantern. It is surprising how few English teachers, even in schools where a good lantern is at hand, ever think of its value in their work. I have seen a class spend a week or more on Irving's sketch of Westminster Abbey and come from the work without images, but with a keen sense of weariness. Such waste of time is folly, and such blunting of the taste for literature is crime. A single day for the reading and an hour with a lantern and a few good slides would have been much more effective.

Another brief suggestion. We are well aware of the educational value of the acted play. Many of us, for the sake of our students, have taken advantage of the work of the Coburn Players, or of the Greet Players, to give the classic drama a vital interpretation which would otherwise have been impossible. The smaller schools cannot use these large companies. A very acceptable substitute is at hand, however, in the professional reader. I doubt not that many here can remember when some bit of great literature was first vitalized for them by an adequate reading. Not all English teachers are good readers, and even if they were, the classroom routine, the familiarity of constant association, and the garish light of day are not conducive to inspirational readings. It would seem desirable, then, that Mr. Coburn's suggestion for a dramatic league among the colleges and universities be extended to the smaller schools. It might there take the form of a league that should employ a reader who could spend a few days as many times a year as desirable in each school, interpreting some of the world's great literature.

This suggestion may possibly have little interest for English teachers in large schools where the pupils have the advantage of good plays and good public readings. For the smaller schools it would be an excellent innovation.

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NO HERO

The stereopticon has proved a very useful adjunct to my work in interesting pupils in the home surroundings of an author or in illustrating a book or play. It certainly makes things very clear to them;